

## **DEAR COLLEAGUE**

Re: Urge Sec. Salazar to respond to reports that wild horses were sold to kill buyer

Since 2009, more than 1,700 captured mustangs have been sold to a known kill buyer, someone who purchases wild horses from Bureau of Land Management auctions and transports them to Mexico for slaughter. Please join us in signing the attached letter to Interior Secretary Ken Salazar requesting that he respond to the more than 25,000 Americans who have petitioned the Interior Department for answers about why this has been allowed to happen.

For more information, or if you wish to sign the attached letter, please contact Brandon Bragato with Rep. Grijalva at (202) 225-2435 or [brandon.bragato@mail.house.gov](mailto:brandon.bragato@mail.house.gov) or Justin Fareed with Rep. Whitfield (202) 225-3115 or [Justin.Fareed@mail.house.gov](mailto:Justin.Fareed@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

Rep. Ed Whitfield  
Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva

## **LETTER TO SALAZAR**

Dear Secretary Salazar,

We write today to express concern about the management of the wild horse and burro program at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Last September, ProPublica reported that since 2009, when you became Secretary, the BLM has sold more than 1,700 captured mustangs to Tom Davis, a Colorado livestock hauler who has been a longtime kill buyer. A BLM spokesperson responded with a promise that the Department of the Interior (DOI) Office of Inspector General would conduct an investigation. It is our understanding that this investigation is ongoing.

As you are aware, the ProPublica revelations have provoked a substantial public outcry. Leading organizations and the public have stepped forward to express their concern with the idea that America's wild horses could be sold by their government to be slaughtered.

On November 13, 2012, the American Wild Horse Preservation Campaign (AWHPC) delivered 25,130 signatures to DOI from concerned citizens around the country. As of today, these citizens haven't heard from you.

We are troubled by your Department's lack of response to the legitimate concerns raised by the AWHPC inquiry and your failure to acknowledge their correspondence. We respectfully ask you to give a written response within the next ten (10) days.

This issue is especially timely because evidence of abusive treatment of mustangs in federal roundups continues to emerge, recently prompting a federal court judge in Nevada to place restrictions on BLM staff with regard to handling practices that include routine electroshocking of captured horses.

The BLM must be more forthcoming with its proposals to modernize the wild horse and burro program. It must also develop a long-term strategy that reflects balanced interests of America's wild horses and burros and the unique legacy of our public lands. We believe the agenda for this conversation should include:

- The effectiveness of roundups as the primary method of managing wild horse and burro populations on public lands – especially when looked at in conjunction with the long-term sustainability and cost of this program.
- Evidence of cruel treatment of wild horses during and after roundups.
- Humane and cost-effective options for on-the-range management of wild horses as an alternative to roundups and removals.

Alternatives are available that will save taxpayer dollars and manage wild horse populations in a manner that reflects their natural free-roaming behavior, as Congress intended when it passed the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act in 1971. Unfortunately, the pace of the roundups has only increased under this administration. We feel it is time to change course.

We look forward to hearing from you and working with your Department to continue this very important conversation. As a show of goodwill, we ask that you respond to the concerns of the groups and citizens who have contacted you and DOI.

Sincerely,

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Rep. Ed Whitfield

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Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva